Candidate Statements 2023-24

The mission of the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) is to serve the collective interests of graduate and professional students at UCSF in order to improve student life on a university and system wide level through dialogue, action, and activities between students, faculty, and staff.

Below you will find the candidate statements of the individuals running for the Executive Council. The ballot for the 2023-24 GPSA Executive Council, proposed updates to the GPSA Constitution, and the Student Transit Pass Referendum will be open April 5-16, 2023. Good Luck!

President Diana Do	**VP of Internal Affairs** Honglip Park	**VP of Finance** Woodger Faugas Serena (Meiyun) He
VP of Diversity Affairs Shweta Annaldasula Jasmine Garcia Sorvena Yoyo	**VP of External Affairs- grad rep** OPEN	**VP of External Affairs - prof rep** Keya Patel and Sarah Shapiro Abha Patkar

Diana Do
School of Pharmacy
Second Year

Hi everyone, my name is Diana Do, and I am currently in my second year in pharmacy school and running for president. I believe that I am fit for this position from my experiences working with not just the school of pharmacy but working with individuals from the other schools at UCSF. My current leadership experiences include being VP of Education for the Women Health Alliance, my internship with Kaiser outpatient pharmacy, and being a peer career advisor for OCPD. My past leadership experiences were working as a pre-orientation leader for the first-year students at the School of Pharmacy, a committee representative for the student service fee advisory committee, a pharmacy class representative for the ADEA High School Outreach Conference Committee, and an elective coordinator for interprofessional aging and palliative care. When I was in every one of these positions, I would collaborate with my fellow colleagues to manage and organize events. I am very open-minded when it comes to new ideas and a problem solver when it comes to any issues that may arise. If elected, I believe that I will serve as a representative and advocate for the GPSA assembly and all the UCSF students with the confidence and communication skills that I have. My goal as the president of GPSA is to develop myself as a leader and help not just the students at the School of Pharmacy but all the schools at UCSF. I look forward to working alongside everyone and thank you so much for your consideration!

Honglip Park
School of Dentistry
Second Year

My name is Honglip Park, and I am thrilled to be running for the position of Vice President of Internal Affairs at UCSF. As a second-year dental student, I have had the privilege of being part of the UCSF community and have seen firsthand the positive impact this organization has on student life here.

My previous work and volunteering experience is directly relevant to my ability to perform well in this role. During my stint in the military in Korea, my primary responsibility was to facilitate communication and coordination among diverse departments, in order to expedite the decision-making process and ensure optimal outcomes. I also spent five years volunteering with a medical mission team in Cambodia, in partnership with non-profit organizations, spearheading transportation logistics.

This position is crucial in fostering social connections among the diverse graduate and professional student body at UCSF. I have come to recognize the importance of creating innovative programs and initiatives to inspire this kind of participation.

Improving and optimizing daily operations should also be a major concern. As such, another priority is to ensure that our meetings run smoothly and transparently, fostering a sense of inclusivity and engagement. I also recognize the significance of maintaining accurate attendance and minutes records, and I am committed to ensuring that this information is readily available to all members.

In order to achieve this, I hope to leverage my communication and organizational skills to help streamline the Assembly's operations. I also plan to work collaboratively with my fellow members to identify opportunities for improving our processes and procedures, and to implement changes as needed to enhance our overall efficiency and effectiveness.

Effective communication with the broader GPSA community is essential to maintaining a strong and engaged membership. To this end, I will work closely with campus publications, including Synapse, to ensure that our community is kept up-to-date on all relevant news and developments, and that our members are informed and empowered to participate in the decision-making process.

It is my hope that my commitment to this role will serve to eliminate existing barriers and promote greater inclusiveness in the organization. I firmly believe that the GPSA can be an invaluable resource for all members, providing support and guidance to help each individual make informed decisions and achieve their goals. Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to serving you all.

Woodger Faugas
School of Medicine
First Year

Dear fellow UCSF community member,

As you read or listen to these words, please consider endorsing my candidacy for the office of Vice President (VP) of Finance for GPSA, our Graduate and Professional Student Association.

As you might know, having served in this critical role, I've gained invaluable experience in analyzing and critiquing budgets multifariously impacting UCSF, GPSA, and UCSF's student services fee (SSF).

In line with our PRIDE values, I've worked closely with diverse, interprofessional teams of graduate students and a supportive faculty advisor in diligently proposing and developing budgetary changes that have shaped student services domains like mental health, transportation, sociocultural undertakings, and outdoor activities.

As the leader of the Chancellor's Student Services Fee Advisory Committee (SSFAC), I've worked with a talented, multidisciplinary team in conducting annual reviews of programs' budgets and operations to ensure wise and compassionate resource allocation.

Importantly, I was also part of the team that brought you this year's UCSF Formal, where, for hundreds of students, GPSA funded and hosted a night filled with spectacular dancing and fun beverages, as well as a taco bar —all at our nearby and historic Exploratorium, one of San Francisco's most renowned venues!

In parting, I am warmly asking you, my fellow community member, to vote for me on election day, in view of my track record of student-centered leadership and my enduring commitment to our student community's welfare.

With your support, I will continue striving to improve our institution and the student experience.

As I've heard it said, "'We the People' means 'all the people.'" And it's in such a vein that I plan to continue advocating for our financial and other interests.

Crucially, and in my leadership journey, I'll never forget the adage, "Either we all count or none of us counts."

At last, thank you for being you, and together, we will build a brighter future for UCSF, our communities, and the world!

Serena (Meiyun) He
First Year
School Pharmacy

Dear members of the Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA),

This is Serena (Meiyun) He, the coming P1 pharmacy student of UCSF. I am excited to run for the vice president of finance in the 2023-24 Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA). As a graduate student, I understand the importance of financial management and the significant role it plays in our academic pursuits. I am eager to apply my skills and experience toward strengthening the financial management of GPSA. Other than that, it is an excellent opportunity for me to bring some new ideas and make GPSA more diverse because of my unique background.

My qualifications for the vice president of finance position include my previous experience in financial management and leadership roles in both community college and university. My friends and I have built up a club called P-MDP (Pre-Medical, Dental, Pharmacy) at City College of San Francisco in 2017 and I was the vice president of the club. In 2018, I serve as a treasure for P-MDP, where I began managing budgets, and processed the financial transactions, analysis, and reporting. What's more, I also have experience as a treasure in an existing club, Pre-Pharmacy Informational Learning and Leadership Society, at UC Berkeley. I was in charging of the flow of money and making a budget plan for the academic year 2021 to 2022. I was also responsible for sponsorship inquiries and collections for the PILLs. Based on those experiments, I believe will be valuable in monitoring and evaluating GPSA's financial performance.

If elected as Vice President of Finance for GPSA, my primary goal will be to ensure that the organization is financially sustainable and able to support the needs of graduate and professional students. To achieve this goal, I plan to focus on developing a comprehensive budget. I will work with the GPSA executive board and committees to develop a detailed budget that reflects the needs and priorities of graduate and professional students. I will also ensure that the budget is transparent and accessible to all members of GPSA. What's more, I will maximize revenue streams by identifying and pursuing new revenue streams for GPSA, such as grants, sponsorships, and partnerships with local businesses and organizations. I will also look for other fundraising activities to support GPSA's mission and goals.

I believe that my experience and qualifications make me well-suited for the role of Vice President of Finance for GPSA. If elected, I promise to work diligently to ensure that GPSA is financially sustainable and able to support the needs of graduate and professional students. Thank you for considering my candidacy, and I hope to have your support in this election.

Shweta Annaldasula
IDP3
School of Dentistry

Andres Tapia once said 'Diversity is the mix. Inclusion is making the mix work.'

Education has always been a passion of mine; the kind of strength and humility that comes from learning with a diversified set of knowledge and cultures is unparalelled. Because of this, I have always been inspired by the Graduate and Professional Student Association's efforts to improve education across all affiliated student divisions at UCSF. Also, my pursuits are in accord with UCSF's PRIDE Values, notably Diversity, which unites the campus by fostering an atmosphere in which we value one another's differences and nurture stronger relations.

Currently, I am serving as the IDP3 Representative for ASDA Committee; Class Secretary of the IDP Class of 2024. In the past, I've held several positions of leadership – I served as Class President during my Dental Class of 2013 in India, a Patient Tech Leader in Free Healthcare Clinics in Salt Lake City, Utah. I headed the community clinic for Larsen and Toubro Hospital in Mumbai, India to provide extensive services to the underserved diverse population. I am familiarized with all the different ideals for this position. These leadership positions have equipped me with the necessary skills to lead, multitask and resolve conflicts more effectively. To add on, I have the capacity to relate to people of all ages and genders due to my outgoing extrovert personality. This has enriched me with qualities of effective networking and communication skills and enabled me to maintain enduring social and professional connections during my years in clinical dentistry.

As an VP of the Diversity Affairs for GPSA, I intend to use my organizational and communication abilities to advertise and promote student participation throughout the academic year in numerous GPSA-led events. For everyone to feel respected, valued, and treated fairly, I also want to cultivate a sense of cultural awareness and sensitivity. Each person sees the world through a different cultural lens. I would organize various programs that help everyone develop their own cultural perspectives in order to strengthen multi-culturalism and promote original innovations for well-being of the community.

It is my goal to be as thorough and collaborative and function as a liaison to strengthen communications and clear dialogue between my colleagues at UCSF and the GPSA community. Additionally, it would provide me with a ground base for networking, understanding the nuances and cruxes at the grass root level.

I thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for your consideration. I hope to have your support.

Jasmine Garcia
First Year
Graduate Division

Diversity is a key driving force of innovation. As future leaders in healthcare and research, it is crucial that we uplift each other's voices and ensure that UCSF continues to be a place where people from different backgrounds can train, learn from each other, and welcome others from different walks of life.

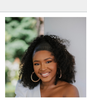
As a first-generation college student, first-generation Mexican-American, and queer woman, I understand the importance of finding a community as an aspiring professional and scientist. This belief is evident in my strong history of advocating for others and being involved in several community outreach and leadership positions. I have held roles as a science teacher, outreach volunteer leader, tutor, SACNAS member, peer mentor, and more.

If elected as Vice President of Diversity Affairs, I would continue to advocate for the student body and amplify the diverse voices that make up this exceptional institution. It would be an honor to work with other Registered Campus Organizations, the Multicultural Resource Center, LGBTQ Resource center, First Generation Support Resources, and others (many of which I am already involved with), and serve as a representative for all of you.

I pride myself in my ability to work well with others, listen to others' concerns, offer resources, connect people, and my ability to maintain a positive attitude to accomplish whatever I set my mind to. My goals in this position are to increase diversity at UCSF by amplifying your voices, hearing your concerns, increasing involvement in Registered Campus Organizations and to continue to advocate for our communities.

Thank you for your consideration!

Sorvena Yoyo
First Year
School of Medicine



I grappled with my decision to move across the country to attend medical school at UCSF. I was born and raised in Massachusetts, and committing to UCSF meant moving away from the only support system I knew. It meant finding and cultivating a new community, it meant starting over. However, I was confident in my decision to attend UCSF because of the commitment this institution has demonstrated to diversity. As a Black woman, this was one of the most important factors that determined where I chose to receive my medical education.

I grew up in a non-diverse neighborhood, often the only persons of color amongst classmates and authority figures. I struggled with my identity as a result of this lack of representation. I felt different, but I simply wanted to blend in. I had trouble assimilating as many of the Haitian cultural norms do not align with American ones causing difficulty connecting with my peers. I embarked on a journey of self-love early on, learning to love my hair and skin because it did not fit the beauty standard portrayed in the media nor my community. I felt marginalized, being fed the narrative that my dreams were unattainable as a Black woman or that my successes were not my own, but a result of affirmative action. Nevertheless, I committed to rewriting that narrative, and strived to excel academically and earn my place on my own merit.

Furthermore, I attended a predominately white undergraduate institution where I did not feel heard or valued. Experiences like these led to my determination to attend a medical school like UCSF that not only promised otherwise, but delivered on that promise. Today, I am continually drawn to experiences where I can lend my voice to advocate for others and break down the barriers that marginalization built.

As a current medical student, I desire to work on initiatives promoting diversity, ensuring that our diverse student population is supported and represented. As Vice President of Diversity Affairs, I intend to use this leadership opportunity as an avenue to be a voice for those who feel silenced, and to advocate for students of all diverse backgrounds.

I have experience in advocacy as a rape crisis advocate, where I provided support and resources to survivors of sexual assault. This experience has equipped me with the skills that are needed as Vice President of Diversity Affairs when hearing student grievances regarding diversity issues. Additionally, I served as a coordinator for my undergraduate institution's multicultural office, providing the space for cultural student organizations to gather in solidarity surrounding campus issues. Finally, I am a member of UCSF's SMAA chapter, whom's mission is to support current and future underrepresented individuals in medicine.

My goal as Vice President of Diversity Affairs is to advocate for our diverse student population, serve as a vessel for understanding student's unique experiences, and facilitate necessary change. I aim to continue to improve UCSF's diversity numbers to match the diverse population of patients we serve.

Keya Patel and Sarah Shapiro
First Year
School of Pharmacy

Our names are Sarah Shapiro and Keya Patel and we are running together for the office of the Vice President of External Affairs - Professional Representative. We were honored to be your VPs of External Affairs this year and represent UCSF on UCGPC. This year, we had the opportunity to highlight the various issues that UCSF students face as well as work with the other UC schools to advocate for these issues on a larger scale both at the state and national capitol. Recently, we met with U.S. Senators and Representatives from California to discuss student needs regarding affordable housing, food security, mental and reproductive health, and student loan forgiveness. We strive to better understand the needs and challenges of our student body so we can help address your concerns.

With our previous experiences on GPSA, we plan to continue the work we've begun this year and become even more involved next year in advocating for the rights of all students. Next year, we would like to increase communication with the various school reps as well as the rest of the GPSA board in order to understand the specific needs of every school and bring these issues to the forefront of our meetings with our UCGPC colleagues.

Thank you for taking the time to consider us for the role of VP of External Affairs and we hope to see you all vote in the upcoming election!

Abha Patkar
First Year
School of Dentistry

When prospective students ask me what I love about UCSF, my answer is always my community and classmates—I have never felt more appreciated and welcomed. Honored to serve as Class President for the class of 2026 dental students, I dedicate my energy to supporting my classmates through guiding change and spearheading creative projects. One of the recent issues that I have been working on is increasing our student store credit to alleviate the burden of expensive dental materials. UCSF is special because it is a graduate-only institution. When voicing problems through my class council position, I have encountered challenges unique to a California public institution and the UC system, while hearing various statements that "this is out of our hands." Running for Vice President of External Affairs on GPSA will propel me to better understand what external factors impact students at a system-wide, UC level, and how to address or improve these issues. I will represent the collective interests and concerns of the entire UCSF student body on a local, state, and national level.

My undergraduate experiences have fostered my passion for proposing change. Having served on the bylaws committee and executive board for my undergraduate sorority, I removed the punishment associated with academic probation and increased the amount of study hours throughout the day in order to foster a wholesome and supportive environment where grades did not define people. Through actively listening to members' concerns, I was inspired to enact change, setting a positive precedent for future scholarship directors. Members felt empowered that their opinions were not only heard but also utilized to make a tangible difference. I will parallel all of these qualities in the UCSF community with my faculty and peers, supporting each member to the best of my ability.

Being VP of External Affairs will push me to step out of my comfort zone and allow me to grow as a leader. My goals as VP of External Affairs consist of melding the fragmentation that I personally feel with our governing student bodies at UCSF. First, I aim to meet with class board members across all departments regularly or host weekly office hours where UCSF students can openly speak about challenges that they face and are important to them. This will allow me to better represent the UCSF student body at external organizations and conferences. Second, I would love to increase transparency on student opportunities for advocacy, empower all UCSF students to voice their opinions, and encourage our student body to attend GPSA meetings, which are open to the public.

I am excited for the opportunity to be someone that the UCSF student body trusts to represent their voices and advocate for their best interests as VP of External Affairs on GPSA. I thank you for your time and consideration with my statement.

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